## REMARKS

Claims 1-32 were examined and reported in the Office Action. Claims 1- 32 are rejected. Claims 1, 9, 19 and 26 are amended. Claims 1-32 remain.

Applicant requests reconsideration of the application in view of the following remarks.

### I. In The Drawings

Applicant has amended the specification to include the reference numerals listed by the Examiner on page 2 of the Office Action. Applicant has amended Figure 10 to correct a typographical error as the selector and IEEE1394 interface were both referenced as 1028. Approval is respectfully requested.

### II. 35 U.S.C. §102(e)

It is asserted in the Office Action that claims 1-10 and 15-25 are rejected to under 37 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Ogino, et al. U.S. Patent No. 6,038,625 ("Ogino"). Applicant respectfully traverses the foregoing rejection for the following reasons.

According to MPEP §2131, "'[a] claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference.' (Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California, 814 F.2d 628, 631, 2 USPQ2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987)). 'The identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as is contained in the ... claim.' (Richardson v. Suzuki Motor Co., 868 F.2d 1226, 1236, 9 USPQ2d 1913, 1920 (Fed. Cir. 1989)). The elements must be arranged as required by the claim, but this is not an ipsissimis verbis test, i.e., identity of terminology is not required. (In re Bond, 910 F.2d 831, 15 USPQ2d 1566 (Fed. Cir. 1990))."

Applicant's claim 1 contains the limitations of "... preparing capability information of each of a plurality of devices with regard to signal formats; designating a device that ultimately receives a signal; collecting the capability information of every

one of the plurality of devices; producing a plurality of possible transmission paths between the receiving device and other devices, based on the capability information collected; identifying a device that transmits a signal and a format of the transmitted signal; selecting one of the plurality of possible transmission paths that matches the transmitting device and the transmitted signal format for a transmission path, issuing commands to the plurality of devices involved in the selected transmission path upon a change of the transmitted signal format; and controlling input/output of the plurality of devices according to the issued commands to establish the transmission path."

Applicants' claim 9 contains the limitations of "... a means for storing capability information regarding signal formats for each of a plurality of devices; an analog input terminal (302); a memory (306) for storing capability information of other devices coupled to a digital interface (308); a digital input/output terminal (300) coupled to the memory; a decoder (303) coupled to the digital interface (308); and a controller (307) which refers to contents in the information storage means and the memory to produce possible transmission paths based on the capability information stored in the information storage means and the memory (306), wherein the controller (307) comprises a command generator for issuing commands to devices involved in the possible selected transmission paths upon a change in signal format."

Applicant's amended claim 19 contains the limitations of "... preparing capability information of each of a plurality of devices with regard to signal formats; designating a device that ultimately receives a signal; collecting the capability information of every one of the plurality of devices; producing a plurality of possible transmission paths between the receiving device and other devices, based on the capability information collected; identifying a device that transmits a signal and a format of the transmitted signal; selecting one of the plurality of possible transmission paths that matches the transmitting device and the transmitted signal format for a transmission path, issuing commands to the plurality of devices involved in the selected transmission path upon a change in signal format; controlling input/output of the plurality of devices according to the issued commands to automatically establish the transmission path; and displaying the selected transmission path on a monitor (305)."

In other words, based on a device's signal format receive, transmit, and/or conversion capabilities, transmission paths are arranged to automatically accommodate devices for signal transmission, whether digital or analog. All devices coupled in a network have their capabilities stored by a controller in one of the devices in the network. A signal format field in a signal is monitored to determine whether to process the signal or not. A command generator generates commands when a format of the transmitted signal changes (e.g., digital to analog, analog to digital).

Ogino discloses a method and system that operates in a IEEE 1394 consumer electronic network that uses assigned identifiers. Ogino also discloses that once a device is added to the home network, capabilities and characteristics are determined. The self-describing data (SDD) structure is used to allow other devices to discover the capabilities of another device. The type of description contained in a SDD is type of device (*e.g.*, TV, VTR). Other possible descriptions within an SDD can be override DCM or a graphical representation of the device. Ogino, however, fails to teach, disclose or suggest preparing receive, transmit and conversion capability information of each of a plurality of devices with regard to signal formats. For example, knowing that a device is a TV or VTR, and the model number, is different from knowing whether the device can transmit signals that are analog and/or digital, receive either analog or digital signals, or convert an analog signal to digital. Moreover, Ogino does not teach, disclose or suggest generating commands upon a change in signal format.

Therefore, since Ogino does not disclose, teach or suggest all of Applicant's amended claims 1, 9 and 19 respective limitations, Applicant respectfully asserts that a *prima facie* rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) has not been adequately set forth relative to Ogino. Thus, Applicant's claims 1, 9 and 19 are not anticipated by Ogino. Additionally, the claims that depend directly or indirectly on claims 1, 9 and 19, namely claims 2-8, 10 and 15-18, and 20-25, respectively, are also not anticipated by Ogino for the above same reason.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. §102(e) rejection for claims 1-10 and 15-25 are respectfully requested.

III. 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

It is asserted in the Office Action that claims 11-14 and 26-32 are rejected to under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ogino in view of no other prior art. Applicant respectfully traverses the foregoing rejection for the following reasons.

Applicant hereby asserts that Ogino is not a valid prior art reference. In accordance with 35 U.S.C. § 103, references which may qualify as prior art under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e), (f), and (g) are excluded from being used as a prior art reference. The text of 35 U.S.C. § 103(c) recites that "[s]ubject matter developed by another person, which qualifies as prior art under one or more of subsections (e), (f) and (g) of section 102 of this title, shall not preclude patentability under this section where the subject matter and the claimed invention were, at the time the invention was made, owned by the same person or subject to an obligation of assignment to the same person." (See 35 U.S.C. §103(a), MPEP 706.02(l)(1)-(2)).

**Statement as to Obligation of Assignment**

The subject matter of Ogino and Applicant's claimed invention were, at the time the invention was made, owned by Sony Corporation and Sony Electronics, Inc. and subject to an obligation of assignment to Sony Corporation and Sony Electronics, Inc. An assignment of the claimed present invention was recorded at Reel No. 010720 and Frame No. 0283 in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office as set forth as attached. Furthermore, the subject application filed on March 31, 2000 claiming the benefit of filing on a provisional U.S. application filed April 9, 1999, which is less than one year from the issue date of Ogino. Therefore, Ogino is not a valid prior art reference and does not obviate Applicant's pending claims. Therefore, Applicant submits that claims 11-14 and 26-32 are allowable.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection for claims 11-14 and 26-32 are respectfully requested.

## CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is believed that all claims now pending, namely 1-32, patentably define the subject invention over the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited at the earliest possible date.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2666 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17, particularly extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,
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**CERTIFICATE OF MAILING**

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail with sufficient postage in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P. O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 on June 23, 2004.

Jean Svoboda